BC STATS
Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations

Infoline

Issue: **97-03** **4** Pages
January 17, 1997

You will find the last 5 issues on our website:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

Report **Low Income Rates in British Columbia**

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/96	% change on year ago
BC	3,888.5	2.5
Canada	30,101.6	1.2
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1995	on year ago
Current Dollars	103,273	4.6
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,107	1.9
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Oct	2,871	1.8
Merchandise Exports (raw) Nov	1,976	-3.6
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Oct	2,602	1.9
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change
(all items - 1986=100)	Nov '96	on year ago
BC	138.8	0.7
Canada	136.8	2.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change
(seasonally adjusted)	Dec '96	on year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,017	3.7
Employed - BC	1,840	4.2
Unemployed - BC	177	-1.1
		Dec '95
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.8	9.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	9.7	9.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jan 15/97	Jan 17/96
Prime Business Rate	4.75	7.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.20	6.95
- 5 year	7.25	7.95
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jan 15/97	Jan 17/96
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.3481	1.3653
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.7418	0.7324
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Oct '96	on year ago
BC	611.94	1.7
Canada	593.77	3.2

SOURCES:
Population, GDP, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Review

Where did I read about that?

In light of the World Trade Organization ruling against the Canadian side in the case involving the split-run of *Sports Illustrated* magazine, you may want to reread the **Report** in the **Infoline** of December 13, 1996 titled *Canada-US Exchange of Magazines a Very One-Sided Affair*. That issue and report continue to be available on our Website.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Labour Force Statistics, December 1996
- Tourism Room Revenue, September 1996
- Earnings and Employment Trends, October 1996

Next week

- Immigration Highlights, First Three Quarters, 1996
- Consumer Price Index, December 1996

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Infoline Report:

January 17, 1997

Low Income Rates in British Columbia

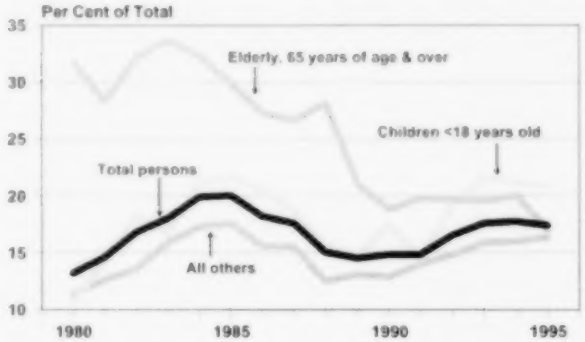
Reprinted from the October 1996 Issue of *Earnings & Employment Trends*. An annual subscription is $60 + GST.

In 1995 the number of persons in British Columbia with incomes below Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs was an estimated 653,000, or 17.4 per cent of the total population, down slightly from the 17.7 per cent recorded in 1994. Incidence of low income in males increased by one percentage point to 16.4 per cent while females experienced a decline of 1.5 percentage points to 18.5 per cent.

An estimated 181,000 children under 18 years old, 20.8 per cent of total children, lived in low income families in 1995 (families where the head of the household is less than 65 years of age). Children living in single parent female families were almost four times more likely to be in a low income situation (56.4 per cent) than those in two-parent families (14.9 per cent). However, since 1980 low income rates for children in single parent female families has remained constant while those of children in two parent families has increased by 9.5 percentage points.

The low income rate for persons 65 years of age and over was 17 per cent in 1995, down from 20 per cent in 1994, continuing a downtrend in the overall percentage of elderly persons with low incomes. In 1980 the rate for elderly persons was 31.7 per cent.

Incidence of Low Income in British Columbia



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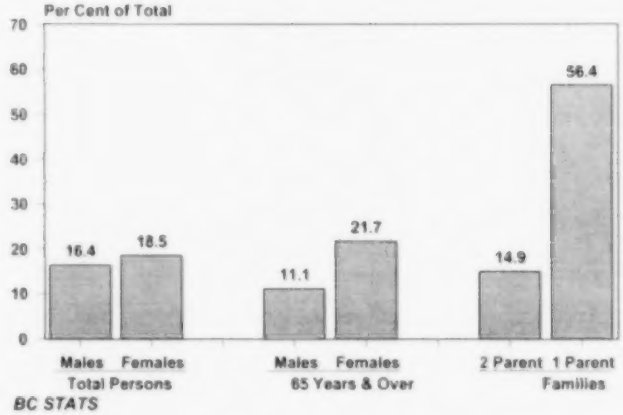
Low Income Rates in B.C. - 1995



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highlights

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a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Tourism Revenues

- **Seasonally adjusted room revenues for BC's accommodation industry continued to fall in September, declining for the fourth consecutive month.** September's 3.1% decline was the largest since last April, when revenues were down 3.4%. Room revenues decreased in six of the first nine months of 1996. *Source: BC STATS*

- **The decline in room revenues was widespread among the various accommodation types.** In medium-sized hotels (those with 76 to 149 rooms), room revenues were virtually unchanged from the previous month (+0.1%), but revenues were down for all other accommodation types. Fishing lodges (-10.2%) and large (250+) hotels (-3.1%) recorded the biggest declines. Among other accommodation types, month-to-month decreases ranged from 1.8% for small hotels (less than 75 rooms) to 2.7% for vacation rentals. *Source: BC STATS*

- **Room revenues were down in all regions of the province except the Northeast (+8.4%) and North Coast (+5.0%) areas.** Kootenay recorded the largest drop (-15.0%), with more moderate declines occurring in the rest of the province. Revenues were down 4.5% in the Lower Mainland/Southwest, which accounts for more than half of total room revenues. In the Vancouver Island/Coast region, room revenues fell 1.0%. *Source: BC STATS*

Business and Economics

- **BC's exports continued to decline in November.** Exports of goods produced in the province were down 3.6% from November 1995. After three years of double-digit export growth, 1996 has not been a particularly good year for the province's exporters. Year-to-date, international sales of goods produced in British Columbia decreased 6.5%. The main factor in the decline was a sharp drop (12.4%) in the value of forest product exports. Producers of wood and paper products had benefitted from large price increases in recent years, but prices for forest products have been trending down throughout the year. The appreciation of the Canadian dollar has also had a negative effect on the value of the province's exports, as prices for many BC products sold to other countries are quoted in US funds.

  BC's exports of automotive products (-15.6%) and industrial goods (-6.1%) were down sharply during the first eleven months of last year. However, energy exports rose 10.9%, and machinery and equipment sales surged ahead, rising 18.3%. Exports of consumer goods (+7.5%) and agricultural products (+0.5%) also rose. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's weak export performance runs contrary to the strength observed in the rest of the country.** Canadian exports during the first 11 months of 1996 were 4.2% higher than in the same period of 1995, and exports rose in all other regions. The largest gains were in the North (+68.0%) and in Alberta (+14.0%). Manitoba (+10.8%) also recorded double-digit growth. Exports from Ontario were up 5.0%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Year-to-date, the value of imports entering the country through BC customs ports was down slightly, dropping 1.5% to $18.0 billion.** Nationally, the value of imports rose 2.9%. About 8% of Canadian imports enter the country through BC customs ports. However, the province is the port of entry for a considerably larger share of Canadian forest products (26%), agriculture and fish products (16%), and consumer goods (12%) imports. BC's location on the Pacific Rim makes it an obvious port of entry for consumer goods which are produced in Asia,

For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Did you know...?
Low calorie soft drinks account for about a fifth of total shipments by the Canadian soft drink industry

and its higher share of food imports is probably due to its proximity to California, which supplies many of the fruits and vegetables sold in Canada. Not all of the goods imported through BC ports are destined for use in the province. In 1995, British Columbians imported $23.3 billion of merchandise from other countries. Imports through BC customs ports totalled $19.6 billion, including those goods which were transshipped to other parts of the country.

Source: Statistics Canada

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities declined 5.3% (seasonally adjusted) between October and November.** The decrease was attributable to a 21.9% drop in non-residential permits issued. The value of residential permits issued in the province rose for the second consecutive month, increasing 2.7% in November. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Labour Force

- **Three out of four workers in the province were employed in service industries in 1996.** Average employment for the year was 1.8 million. Of this total, 1.4 million workers were employed in service industries. Last year, 317,000 BC workers were employed in the wholesale and retail trade industries, while 101,000 workers had jobs in forestry and related manufacturing activities. Primary industries (agriculture, logging, fishing and mining) together employed 84,000 people in 1996, 5% of the total. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Social Trends

- **10,357 divorces, involving the parents of 5,093 children, were granted in BC in 1995.** Custody for most (3,069) of these children was awarded to the mother. Joint-custody arrangements were made between the parents of 1,394 children. Fathers were granted custody in only a relatively small number of cases (involving 618 children). Nationally, mothers received custody of two-thirds of the children affected by divorces, while joint-custody arrangements were made for a fifth of the 47,118 Canadian children whose parents divorced in 1995. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Children born in British Columbia in 1995 had the highest life expectancy in the country.** The life expectancy for children born in that year was 79.0 years, compared to the Canadian average of 78.3 years. Alberta (78.6) and Ontario (78.6) were the only other provinces where life expectancies were above the national average. The lowest life expectancy in the country was in Yukon, where children born in 1995 could be expected to live for an average of 72.4 years. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **There were 46,820 live births in BC in 1995, down 0.4% from the previous year.** The fertility rate (the number of births per woman) fell to 1.60 from 1.61 in 1994. This was below the national average of 1.64, down from 1.66 in 1994. Fertility rates fell in most regions, and ranged from a low of 1.25 in Newfoundland to a high of 2.78 in the Northwest Territories. In the United States, the fertility rate was higher (2.02) than in Canada, but member states in the European Union had an average fertility rate of 1.43 in 1995. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The average age of Canadian women who gave birth in 1995 was 28.8, up from 28.6 in 1994.** The average age of new mothers has increased by almost three years during the last two decades. In 1975, the average age of women who gave birth 26.0. Women aged 30 and over accounted for 42.6% of all births in 1995, compared to 19.2% of births twenty years earlier. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The number of deaths in British Columbia rose from 25,939 to 26,375 between 1994 and 1995.** The increase (1.7%) was about the same as at the national level, where the number of deaths rose 1.8% to 210,733. More than half (54.7%) of the deaths in Canada during 1995 were due to cancer and heart disease. Cancer supplanted heart disease as the leading cause of death for the second year in a row. Stroke (7.4%) was the third leading cause of death. Deaths due to AIDS accounted for 0.8% of the total, as 1,764 Canadians died of the disease in 1995. *Source: Statistics Canada*

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